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LAW & JUSTICE

Here is our reply to Greg Donnelly's question:

Every child knows they have been conceived with the help of a man. Vicki did not tell Brenna she has a biological father, Vicki told her about the arrangement with her donor (as appropriate for her age) and introduced them when she was 1 year old. Brenna has chosen what she calls this relationship and what priority it holds for her.

We believe it is absolutely up to the parents of children to tell them how they have been conceived and who was involved in that process. We believe honesty about that process is essential - in heterosexual families as well as homosexual ones (because, of course, the majority of donor arrangements take place within heterosexual families) - and we trust that with honesty and a willingness to consider what a child is saying is important to them, most situations will have a happy ending.

In the Australian culture of biological "ownership" of children it can be very threatening to a lesbian couple to involve a known donor. There are legal precedents that alert us to take care or we will lose the children we carry and give birth to, the children who live with us as infants. While lesbians are seen as second class citizens, there will be disagreement over the definition of "best interests of the child". We can fully understand why some lesbians would prefer to not disclose the identity of a donor to their children - and indeed, why some donors prefer to remain unknown.

A social family is often different to one defined by biological ties. This is as true for families with same sex parents as for heterosexual families with fostered and then adopted children, heterosexual families where the true biological father is unknown or heterosexual families who access donor or surrogacy services.

We emphatically do not think there should be a legal imperative that a child living with same sex parents spend time with the donor, just as there should be no legal imperative for a child conceived through donor insemination in a heterosexual family to spend time with the donor.

Regards,

Vicki and Jackie